

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 ACDA-12 AID-05 FDRE-00
EUR-12 /095 W
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O 091759Z MAY 78
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9415
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, SREF, WA, SF
SUBJECT: UNHCR SUPPORT FOR NAMIBIAN REFUGEES IN ANGOLA

REF: A) STATE 114310, B) STATE 97342

1. MISOFF MET WITH UNHCR AREA OFFICER FOR ANGOLA, A. A. PETERS (BENIN), AND UNHCR IN LUANDA, N. BWAKIRA (BURUNDIAN), MAY 9, TO DISCUSS ALLEGATIONS CONTAINED IN "BEELD" ARTICLE REPORTED REF (B) CONCERNING UNHCR ASSISTANCE TO SWAPO CAMP AT CASSINGA.
2. PETERS HAD PREPARED "NOTE FOR THE FILE" PRESENTING UNHCR POSITIONS ON SUBJECT IN RESPONSE TO POINTS AND QUESTIONS RAISED IN REF (B) WHICH HAD BEEN DISCUSSED EARLIER WITH DEPUTY UNHCR MACE. PRINCIPAL POINTS OF NOTE IN PARAPHRASE FOLLOW:

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A. WAR SITUATION IN NORTHERN NAMIBIA FOR LAST FEW YEARS, ESPECIALLY SINCE END OF FIGHTING IN ANGOLA, RESULTED IN LARGE-SCALE REFUGEE EXODUS INVOLVING "SEVERAL THOUSANDS" OF PERSONS, INCLUDING WOMEN, CHILDREN AND AGED. FROM 5,000 ONE YEAR AGO NAMBIAN REFUGEES IN ANGOLA CURRENTLY BELIEVED AROUND 20,000, ALL IN WUILA PROVINCE. (NOTE: BWAKIRA STATED THAT CURRENT NUMBER IS BELIEVED

APPROXIMATELY 30,000.) TO MEET BASIC REQUIREMENTS, SWAPO APPROACHED NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE, I.E., WFP, UNICEF, UNDP, WHO AND UNHCR.

B. ALTHOUGH SWAPO NEVER OBJECTED TO, AND IN FACT ALWAYS WELCOMED UNHCR VISIT TO THE AREA, LOCAL SECURITY SITUATION IN SOUTH ANGOLA HAD EARLIER MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANY UN REP TO FLY TO CASSINGA. HOWEVER, FROM APRIL 10 TO 15, "HIGH LEVEL" UNICEF TEAM COMPOSED OF MOSTEFAOUI AHMED, UNICEF REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR WEST AFRICA, AND FALL IBRAHIMA, UNICEF DIRECTOR FOR CENTRAL AFRICA, BASED RESPECTIVELY AT ABIDJAN AND BRAZZAVILLE, VISITED CASSINGA AREA WITH OFFICIALS FROM BOTH SWAPO AND ANGOLA GOVERNMENT. THEIR REPORT STATES THAT AID TO NAMBIAN REFUGEES HAS SO FAR FALLEN SHORT OF REQUIREMENTS. DISTRIBUTIONS WERE EFFICIENTLY SUPERVISED BY SWAPO AND, IN GENERAL, SITUATION APPEARED UNDER CONTROL, ACCORDING THEIR REPORT.

C. ARRANGEMENTS CURRENTLY UNDER WAY FOR UNHCR REP IN LUANDA TO VISIT AREA NOT-TOO-DISTANT FUTURE. IT IS BELIEVED SUCH VISIT WOULD MATERIALIZE AS SOON AS SUPPLIES CURRENTLY IN PIPELINE REACH LUANDA. (NOTE: BWAKIRA SAID THAT HE WOULD BE RETURNING TO LUANDA IN COURSE OF CURRENT WEEK. HE HAS BEEN ATTENDING UNHCR CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE IN GENEVA. HE REPORTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT LESS THAN 50,000 DOLLARS WORTH OF UNHCR SUPPLIES, OUT OF \$450,000 BUDGETED, HAS ACTUALLY BEEN DELIVERED TO REFUGEES IN CASSINGA AREA.)

D. SO FAR UNHCR ASSISTANCE TO GROUP IS AS FOLLOWS:

1) MEDICAL CARE. PROVISION OF DRUGS AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT (AMOUNT UNSPECIFIED) FOR "SMALL HOSPITAL" UNDER DIRECTION OF SWAPO HEALTH DIVISION IN CASSINGA REGION. (PETERS CLARIFIED THAT THIS WAS FORMER MINING HOSPITAL LOCATED SPECIFICALLY AT JAMBA, WHICH HAD BEEN HEAVILY DAMAGED, AND WAS REPAIRED IN ORDER TO PROVIDE MEDICAL SERVICES TO REFUGEES IN JAMBA-CASSINGA AREA.)

2) FOOD AIRLIFTING. UNHCR PROVIDED \$32,000 TO FUND TWO FLIGHTS TO AIRLIFT FOOD FROM LUSAKA TO LUANDA. MAJOR PART OF FOOD DONATED BY WFP, WHILE SEVEN OF THE TWELVE FLIGHTS REQUIRED TO AIRLIFT TOTAL FOOD QUANTITY WERE FINANCED BY UNDP. BALANCE FINANCED BY YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT.

3) IN ADDITION TO ABOVE, ARRANGEMENTS CURRENTLY UNDER

WAY FOR FOLLOWING TO BE SUPPLIED TO SWAPO FOR BENEFIT
OF REFUGEE POPULATION: TENTS, VEHICLES, SCHOOL EQUIP-
MENT, CLOTHING, BEDS, MATTRESSES, COOKING UTENSILS,
BUILDING MATERIALS, ETC.

E. SUPPLIES BEING PROVIDED TO SWAPO ARE IN NO WAY
DIFFERENT FROM THOSE NORMALLY PROVIDED OTHER CATEGORIES
OF REFUGEES, ALTHOUGH FOR REASONS BEYOND THEIR
CONTROL, NO UNHCR OFFICIAL HAS SO FAR BEEN ABLE TO
VISIT CASSINGA, THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT
UNHCR ASSISTANCE, AS WITH OTHER UN AGENCIES, IS BEING
DIRECTED TO GENUINE REFUGEES AND NOT TO TRAINING CAMPS.

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F. TOTAL UNHCR ALLOCATION FOR ASSISTANCE (1977-1978)
AMOUNTS TO \$450,000. BY COMPARISON, FAO RECENTLY
APPROVED \$711,000 ALLOCATION FOR THIS GROUP, BEYOND
EARLIER \$200,000 APPROVED LAST YEAR. BOTH UNICEF AND
UNDP HAVE CONTRIBUTED FAR LARGER AMOUNTS THAN UNHCR.

G. UNHCR ASSISTANCE TO NAMIBIAN REFUGEES UNDER SWAPO
SPONSORSHIP DOES NOT DIFFER FROM TYPE OF ASSISTANCE
UNHCR HAS GIVEN IN SIMILAR SITUATIONS ELSEWHERE, AND
INDEED TO OTHER REFUGEE GROUPS UNDER SUCH LIBERATION
MOVEMENTS AS ZAPU IN ZAMBIA AND ZANU IN MOZAMBIQUE.
IN FACT, UNHCR ASSISTANCE CONSIDERED TO LITTLE, GIVEN
MAGNITUDE OF NEEDS AND CONSIDERING PRIME RESPONSIBILITY
CONCERNING REFUGEES. END PARAPHRASE.

3. FOREGOING BELIEVED TO COVER MOST QUESTIONS RAISED BY REF (B) AND BEELD ARTICLE. HOWEVER PETERS AND BAWKIRA EMPHATICALLY DENIED THAT UNHCR, THROUGH ITS CONTRIBUTIONS, WAS HELPING SUPPORT SWAPO GUERRILLA FIGHTERS IN ANY MANNER. THEY EMPHASIZED THAT WHILE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES UNHCR COULD NOT EXERCISE CONTROL IN ACTUAL AREA TO ASSURE THAT ASSISTANCE WAS GOING TO CIVILIAN REFUGEE POPULATIONS, THEY WERE CONFIDENT THAT THIS WAS IN FACT THE CASE. PETERS AND BAWKIRA STATED THAT ASSISTANCE WAS TURNED OVER FOR DISTRIBUTION TO ANGOLA GOVERNMENT, OR MORE FREQUENTLY TO SWAPO REPRESENTATIVES WITH ANGOLAN AUTHORIZATION, WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT REFUGEES WOULD BE ULTIMATE BENEFICIARIES. PETERS OBSERVED THAT UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES UNHCR "HAD TO PLACE ITS FAITH IN SOMEONE," WHICH IN THIS CASE WAS THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT. VANDEN HEUVEL

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